



# **POTENTIAL DOG OFF LEASH AREAS IN QUEEN ANNE AND MAGNOLIA PUBLIC MEETING**

**Tuesday, June 27, 2006, 6:30pm-8:30pm**  
Magnolia Community Center

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

**Staff**

Lana Krisman, Project Manager; Kathleen Conner, Park Planner, Charles Sablan, Special Projects Manager

**Members/Attendees**

**Present:**

Guila Muir, Facilitator

**Meeting Outcome**

The purpose of the meeting was to gather public input to help Parks evaluate the possibility of creating up to two dog off leash areas in the Queen Anne and Magnolia neighborhoods. The following information was provided in a presentation.

- Brief background of Seattle's Off Leash Program
- An overview of the decision making process
- How and Why sites were identified
- Description of each potential site and location within the park: Magnolia Park, Magnolia Manor, Thorndyke Park, David Rodgers Parks and Kinnear Park.

The meeting was held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Approximately 120 community members attended.

**Potential Off Leash  
Areas**

After meeting with representatives of the Magnolia Community Club, Queen Anne Community Council and Citizens for Off Leash Areas (COLA), Seattle Parks identified five parks to be considered for a dog off leash area. Parks hosted two separate meetings in Magnolia and Queen Anne to take public comment on the merits of the sites and on our evaluation of the sites. If there is broad support, Parks will proceed with a public hearing with the Board of Park Commissioners to establish one or two new pilot off leash areas to serve Magnolia and Queen Anne. This project is a planning process only. There are no funds for park improvements for an off leash area at this time. Funds could be sought from

the Neighborhood Matching Fund or other outside sources.

In order to identify sites, the committee and Parks used site selection factors that are included in the 1997 City Council Resolution that established the Off Leash Program. These factors are often necessary for a successful off leash area. We evaluated the park sites against these key factors and the five sites presented at meetings were those that met as many of these as possible.

### **Public Comment**

#### **Comments concerning potential sites:**

##### **In Support:**

- David Rodgers Park is not a designated landmark.
- There needs to be more than one off leash area – one in Magnolia and one in Queen Anne.
- Off leash areas serve one group not well represented in the city. There are many dogs in the city and a lack of services for dogs in appropriate park settings. There are more dogs in Seattle than children.
- Agree to a controlled area if you don't like off-leash areas.
- Dog park in parks with problems such as lower Kinnear is an opportunity to take back the use of parks.
- Many dog owners drive long distances to off leash areas and hope for one in Queen Anne and Magnolia. It is ok for kids to go by dog parks. It is good for their mental health. Dogs need exercise and socialization.
- Off leash areas do impact parks but parks can be protected and improved. For example, Marymoor Park off leash area was revegetated and fencing was added.
- Magnolia Manor – off leash areas allow freedom for dogs and camaraderie with neighbors.
- COLA board member - tired of driving 45 minutes every day to go to a dog park. Small one is better than nothing.
- Magnolia Manor - there is no playground in the park and it is an underused park.
- Dog owner has 2 dogs. Off-leash population is underserved.
- Tired of getting tickets.
- This is an emerging use and parks belong to all. Looking for a place that satisfies needs. Fencing is not required in the ordinance and the area just needs to be “enclosed”. There is an 18 month pilot program period. Problems can be mitigated and Parks can close off leash areas if not working.
- Acknowledge group that has been working to find an off leash area in Queen Anne and Magnolia for 15 years.
- Dog owners want to make this work and will volunteer to be

stewards of sites.

- Designated off leash areas are separate from other areas of park.
- Need natural parks for dogs to play in.
- Discovery Park is an option for a destination site but smaller, community based sites are needed.
- More dogs in Seattle than children.
- Agree to a controlled area if you don't like off-leash areas. Off leash areas in parks with problems such as Kinnear offer an opportunity to take back the use of our parks.
- Little dogs can't go to regular parks and support area for a small dogs.

**Opposed:**

- Potential off leash areas are too small, approx. ¼ acre in size.
- Both sites for Queen Anne - no off-street parking.
- Parking is an issue at Magnolia Manor on 28<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Kinnear Park is a designated landmark and any proposals for the park would have to be reviewed by the Landmarks Board.
- Parking and traffic is an issue near Magnolia Blvd.
- Opposed to off leash areas in small parks. Small parks are not appropriate for this kind of use.
- Thorndyke Park - the whole park will be impacted, not just off-leash area. Parks are for everybody and not special interests.
- Thorndyke Park - 15 yrs ago dogs were on leashes. Now, there are many more dogs that add noise and smells to the park.
- The issue is whether off leash areas should be in our beautiful parks. Picture chain link fences, wood chips, portapotties in our small parks. Larger parks such as Golden Garden are good sites as there is parking lot and no adjacent neighbors. Off leash areas will ruin small parks.
- Magnolia Manor -can't sustain use. In winter, the park is nearly destroyed. Animal Control doesn't respond. Offensive to the community who participated in creation of park when established 19 years ago. This will be a dog pen in middle of park and will ruin open space. City water contamination a potential problem.
- What problems haven't been resolved? Coalition for Off Leash Areas representative responded they have no direct control of issues
- Magnolia Manor Park – Let kids run in street because park was too crowded with dogs.
- The five sites do not meet all of criteria.
- Magnolia Manor Park – park is underused because families can't take their children to the park. Off leash areas are dirty and dusty and look terrible with fences.
- Law protects rights of people not dogs.
- Thorndyke Park – parking a serious problem.

- Citizens need to follow the leash laws and turn in illegal off-leash owners.
- Would an emerging use take precedence over established uses?
- Off-leash parks in other parks are ok but are inappropriate in small park sites.
- Magnolia Park – park is a sigh of relief from the city. Don't take away green space.
- Dogs in park scare children.
- Thorndyke Park is mostly natural area with trees and flat areas are the only place for kids to play. Runoff from the park flows downslope to neighboring properties.

Comments concerning Discovery Park and other suggested sites:

- Parks needs to look at more sites including non park sites.
- What other parks were looked at? Why were they eliminated?
- What about Discovery Park? Find a site in the 30 acre military area. The open grassy fields are more appropriate than small parks. Dogs are off leash all over the park.
- Smith Cove was suggested as a possible site. Use of the property has been established as a playfield. There may be space at the perimeter of the playfield.
- It is time to look at amending the Discovery Park master plan. There was large support for forming a coalition to look at the master plan to find a place in the park for an off leash area.
- Suggest the North Field at Discovery Park near Lawton wood.
- Look at Discovery Park? Pursue something else than what is on the table.
- Against off-leash in small parks. Suggest in Discovery Park?
- Who should the public contact to discuss Discovery Park? There is a lot of empty, underutilized property in Discovery Park.
- Looking into a site at Discovery Park would take too much time from the process.
- The master plan was changed very quickly to accommodate South Lake Union Park development. Suggest we pursue Ft. Lawton option.
- All areas suggested inappropriate. Look into Smith Cove and Discovery Park.
- This process is a good start to find if smaller parks would work. If this process does not support a small park site then look to Discovery Park.